

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 and 32-44 are pending; Claims 1, 3, and 14 are amended; Claims 32-43 are newly added; and no claims are canceled herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment, as support may be found in the specification, at least, at pages 19-20.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Malin (U.S. Pat. No. 3,514,328); Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Komanduri et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,931,718, hereafter Komanduri); and Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Nakano (U.S. Pat. No. 5,044,128).

At the outset, Applicants thank Examiner Markoff for the interview granted Applicants' representative on August 11, 2005. During the interview, the outstanding rejections of Claims 1-14 were discussed with regard to the references of record.

More specifically, as discussed during the interview, the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is respectfully traversed.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 1-14 for a failure to include essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a magnetic field generating device positioned to apply a magnetic force to said magnetic substance." During the interview, it was indicated that this amendment would obviate this rejection.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 3, Claim 3 has been amended to remove the term "effectively" and the phrase "the action of said magnetic force." As for Claims 8-11 and 13, these claims have not been amended herewith because it is respectfully submitted that

these claims are not indefinite. As discussed during the interview, while Claims 8-11 and 13 are broad claims, they are not indefinite. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph should be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejections of Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by any of Malin, Komanduri, and Nakano, these rejections are all traversed.

At the outset, as set forth in MPEP § 707.07(d), an omnibus rejection of the claim on the references is usually not informative and should therefore be avoided. This is especially true where certain claims have been rejected on one ground and other claims on another ground. A plurality of claims should never be grouped together in a common rejection, unless that rejection is equally applicable to all claims in the group. In this case, Claims 1-14 have been rejected based upon Malin, Komanduri, and Nakano. For each of these rejections, the Office Action states “see entire document” and does not address with any particularity the features recited in any of the claims.

Each of Claims 1-14 recites features not disclosed or suggested by any of the applied references. For example, independent Claim 1 recites that the magnetic field generating device is positioned to increase a magnitude of said magnetic field after a predetermined interval, thereby increasing a specific gravity of the magnetic substance and enabling removal of dirt.

As this feature is not disclosed or suggested by any of Malin, Komanduri, or Nakano, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-14 patentably distinguish over these three references. It is therefore respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections of Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Newly added Claims 32-43 recite additional features not disclosed or suggested by any of the references applied in the outstanding Office Action. For example, independent

Claim 32, from which Claims 33-44 depend, recites in part that the magnetic field generating device is configured to increase a magnitude of the magnetic force after a predetermined interval, thereby increasing a specific gravity of the magnetic substance and enabling removal of dirt from the cleaning medium. Claim 44 depends from allowable Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 32-44 are also in condition for allowance.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing discussion and present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

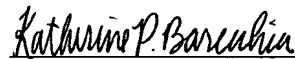
Respectfully submitted,

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